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DCI/IC 73-0847
8 August 1973

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT : COINS Files

- REFERENCES:
- a. Memo for Dr. Martin/Gen. Allen; Subject: COINS Files; dtd 3 Aug 73; Handle Via COMINT Channels
 - b. IHC/USIB Inventory of Community Information Handling Systems; Secret, Annex A to IHC-AR-5; 1 Aug 72
 - c. Draft paper from Messers. Davis & Gorny for a Council for International Economic Policy from the Joint SIC-EIC USIB Working Groups; Secret

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2. Ref C, Att B, is a draft paper that the Joint SIC (Scientific Intelligence Committee) and the EIC (Economic Intelligence Committee) has prepared on the computer industry/technology in Hungary and Poland. Other studies for the USSR and PRC have been prepared. Perhaps an index of what is available and where and how it may be obtained would be useful on the COINS.

3. Ref A, para 3 - Agree. Computer files are expensive to build and expensive to update and should only be put on-line when the need and timeliness of

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the information so dictates. Therefore, I am not advocating that the items discussed in this memo be put on COINS but that the COINS Files Working Group consider these items.



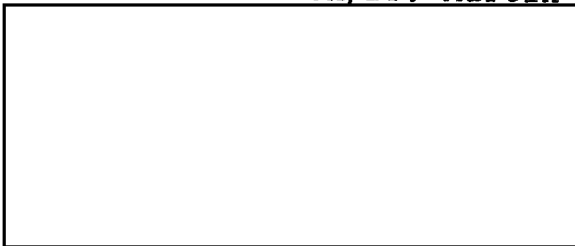
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Chief, IHC Support Staff

Atts (2)

Distribution:

1 - Gen. Allen/Dr. Martin w/atts



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31 July '73

Talking Paper on COINS for DCI @ PFIAB

COINS stands for Community On-Line Intelligence Network System. In practice it permits intelligence analysts sitting at electric typewriters connected to their own and other agencies' computers to withdraw and manipulate information. Had the COINS concept originated in the Community before such typewriter-computer connections had proliferated we would have, I believe, few if any problems now. That however is not the case.

The COINS concept arose in 196⁵, largely due to impetus given by this Board and was formalized in early 1968 as an experiment by DCI Helms. Since then, COINS -- and related activities in DOD -- has proved its feasibility and we can now end the "experiment" and become operational.

As a beginning I'll recount briefly my perception of COINS' problems or needs in rank order -- perhaps some of you will have other views and I will appreciate them and benefit from them. Then I will tell you what I intend to do about these matters.

1. Propagation of the Faith which we have in COINS that it can improve the quality and timeliness of our substantive intelligence is necessary. We will need to become activist in informing, training and motivating analysts to use COINS. COINS is a product which can figuratively and quite literally make money for the community and we must market that product aggressively.

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2. Common Language -- the words analysts use to "talk" to computers -- varies from agency to agency. For example, to access a data file, one analyst may say "get" and another "fetch" so a computer is like a country: you have to speak the language to do business. We can fix this problem: one approach is technical, the other social.

3. File quality -- its scope, accuracy, currency and so forth -- is a problem also when analysts deal with information in data banks in a number of agencies because presently we have no standards for these virtues nor if we did, means of enforcing them. Clearly file quality has a bearing on propagation of COINS in the intelligence community for if there is lack of confidence there is lack of use.

4. Interactive capability is not so much a problem as a goal or need. Presently we "bulk process" queries to a computer: this means an analyst asks, along with others, until an adequate batch of queries is formed at which time the computer responds to all more or less at once. The analysts might, under bulk processing, wait half an hour or more for a response which clearly could be too long under some circumstances. We know how to fix this problem so as to give near real-time response and to a degree fix the common language problem also.

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5. There are management problems also; these really comprise "all other." I put this last not because I think management problems are least important but because the solutions are either clear and easy or obscure or general or only nascent. They are:

- a. need for adequate COINS funding on a line-item basis
- b. computer and files security (which is not peculiar to COINS)
- c. interfacing communications systems of COINS and DOD's

Intelligence Data Handling System (IDHS)

d. *clarification of the Project Management Office (NSA) relations with the Executive Agent (ASD-I).*

What to do about these problems? Some modest funds and some attention can care for them. Through the mechanism of IRAC -- the Intelligence Resources Advisory Committee -- I intend to do two things: assure that COINS funding is not fragmented in each agency's budget but that there is line item funding, for COINS is in fact of central concern; and I will assure that adequate funds are available in FY 74 [redacted] in FY 75 -- 25X1

25X1 [redacted] This funding will permit us to ~~employ~~ DARPA technology for ^{to COINS} computer netting. At once, this can give us an interactive capability to the degree local computers permit ^{and} moderate the COINS-IDHS interface. ^{The COINS} Executive Agent is presently considering what his recommendation will be for ~~at-~~ ^{training} ~~with some additional development~~ a common language. We will in addition

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4

deploy more persons to COINS subscribers -- we now have four -- who will counsel, inform, help or do what it takes to get wider acceptance. I personally believe this is the crux if at the same time we are improving files.

In the USIB forum, I will give my approbation to COINS and solicit cooperation of the members in improving files quality in their agencies and in giving stimulus to the use of COINS. I will use my IC Staff to assure that the focus on file improvement and system utilization is maintained. Following discussions in USIB and IRAC I will sharpen the DCI's interim guidance given to ASD(I) earlier this year by a new directive terminating the COINS experiment inaugurated in 1968, declaring it operational and seeking these new levels of performance.

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